

# **Department of Toxic Substances Control Site Mitigation and Brownfield Reuse Program**

## **ENVIROSTOR FAQs Frequently asked Questions & Answers**

### **Q: What is EnviroStor?**

A: The Department of Toxic Substances Control's (DTSC's) Site Mitigation and Brownfields Reuse Program's (SMBRP's) EnviroStor database is an online search and Geographic Information System (GIS) tool for identifying sites that have known contamination or sites for which there may be reasons to investigate further. Users can conduct searches by site name, address, city, and county, or EnviroStor ID number. The EnviroStor database can also be downloaded.

### **Q: How do I access the EnviroStor database?**

A: You can access the EnviroStor database on DTSC's Internet website at: [www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/](http://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/). If you need assistance with the EnviroStor database, please contact the EnviroStor Help Link at: [envirostor@dtsc.ca.gov](mailto:envirostor@dtsc.ca.gov), or call the EnviroStor help desk at (916) 323-3400.

### **Q: What type of information can be obtained from EnviroStor?**

A: The EnviroStor database includes the following site types: Federal Superfund sites (National Priorities List (NPL)); State Response, including Military Facilities and State Superfund; Voluntary Cleanup; and School sites. You can obtain information that includes site name, site type, status, address, any restricted use (recorded deed restrictions), past use(s) that caused contamination, potential contaminants of concern, potential environmental media affected, site history, planned and completed activities. For more information about site type and status, please refer to the Glossary of Terms.

### **Q: What type of information is not included in EnviroStor?**

A: The EnviroStor database does not include hazardous waste treatment, storage, or disposal facilities or generators/transporters of hazardous waste that fall under the jurisdiction of DTSC's Hazardous Waste Management Program (HWMP) and/or the delegated Certified Unified Program Agency (i.e., Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) or corrective action sites). In addition, the EnviroStor database does not include sites where DTSC performed an emergency removal at a former methamphetamine (meth) laboratory. The EnviroStor database does not include ALL contaminated sites throughout California. Other Federal, State, and local agencies maintain lists of properties under their jurisdiction.

### **Q: What is the difference between conducting a search on the EnviroStor Home Page versus using the Basic Site Search or Advanced Site Search?**

A: The Home Page of the EnviroStor database includes the following site types: Federal Superfund sites (National Priorities List (NPL)); State Response sites; Voluntary Cleanup sites; and School Cleanup sites. This search feature is intended to identify sites where cleanup actions (such as a removal action) or extensive investigations are planned or have occurred. The Basic Site Search and Advanced Site Search provide a listing of ALL sites within the EnviroStor database and include the following additional site types: Historical; Evaluation; Military Evaluation; School Evaluation; Border Zone;

and CalMortgage. Typically, these additional sites: 1) are in the preliminary phase of a site investigation; 2) were found to have no contamination; or 3) were referred to another agency or program.

**Q: How can I search for contaminated sites near me?**

A: From the EnviroStor Home page you can perform a search by City, Zip Code, or County and obtain a listing of sites or map your results. Selecting "Listing of Sites" provides results in a list format and contains information including site name, site type, status, and address. The option "Map" provides search results in an interactive geographical map. Both of these options provide a link to detailed site information, such as any restricted use (recorded deed restrictions), regulatory profile, site history, and planned and completed activities.

**Q: How can I search for a specific site?**

A: There are two search options for finding a specific site - "Basic Site Search" or "Advanced Site Search." Both options are located under the heading of "Tools" in the gray shaded bar on the left of the screen. The Basic Site Search allows you to enter partial information, such as site name, address, City, Zip Code, or County to bring up a list of sites matching the entry. The Advanced Site Search includes the same fields found in the Basic Site Search, and provides additional fields such as various ID Codes, Assessor's Parcel Number (APN), Status, Site Type, Branch, School District, Funding, National Priorities List, and Special Program. **NOTE:** If you are conducting a search using a site name, you may need to enter the partial site name using various spelling and spacing. For example, Pacific Gas and Electric may be entered into the database as "PG&E," "P G&E," "P G & E," "PG & E," or "Pacific Gas & Electric." You should use partial information to find a site, unless you know exactly how the site appears in the EnviroStor database.

**Q: I am interested in purchasing a piece of property. Can the EnviroStor database tell me if the property is potentially contaminated?**

A: You can conduct a search to find out if certain property is included in DTSC's EnviroStor database. However, the EnviroStor database does not include ALL contaminated sites throughout California. Other State and local agencies maintain lists of contaminated properties under their jurisdiction. The only way to be sure that a site does not have contamination is to have the site evaluated. For more information on environmental consultants, please consult source information like telephone directories or contact DTSC's Public and Business Liaisons at (800) 72TOXIC (728-6942). From outside California, please call (916) 255-3545.

**Q: What are some of the other search features?**

A: Under the heading of "Reports," users can view and export results for the following canned reports: Sites by Program (provides a list of all sites broken down by program); Mandated Reports (includes the Hazardous Waste and Substance Site List (Cortese) and Completed Sites); Senate District; Assembly District; and Deed Restrictions.

**Q: Can I search for a site using the APN (Assessor's Parcel Number)?**

A: Under the heading of "Tools," click on the "Advanced Site Search," and you can search for a site by entering the APN. However, this is not the best method to search for sites, since APNs are only available for a limited number of sites and you cannot search by a partial APN.

**Q: Does the EnviroStor database contain information on the location of public drinking water wells?**

A: No, DTSC does not maintain information on public drinking water wells. For information regarding well data, please contact the Department of Health Services (<http://www.dhs.ca.gov/ps/ddwem/>).

**Q: Does the EnviroStor database include information regarding disposing of batteries, tires, waste oil, and recycling of scrap metal?**

A: No, the EnviroStor database does not include information regarding disposal of household hazardous waste, such as batteries and waste oil. For more information, you can access DTSC's general information on Universal Waste at: <http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/HazardousWaste/UniversalWaste/index.cfm>, or contact the California Integrated Waste Management Board at: <http://www.ciwmb.ca.gov/>.

**Q: How often is information in the EnviroStor database updated?**

A: Site information in the EnviroStor database is updated continually to provide the user with the most recent information. However, map data and downloadable files are updated every night.

**Q: What is the Cortese List?**

A: The Hazardous Waste and Substances Sites (Cortese) List is a planning resource used by the State, local agencies, and developers to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act requirements in providing information about the location of hazardous materials release sites. Government Code section 65962.5 requires the California Environmental Protection Agency to develop, at least annually, an updated Cortese List. DTSC is responsible for a portion of the information contained in the Cortese List. Other State and local government agencies are required to provide additional hazardous material release information for the Cortese List.

**Q: Is the Cortese List included in EnviroStor?**

A: SMBRP's EnviroStor database provides one component of the Cortese List data by identifying State Response and National Priorities List (NPL) (Federal Superfund), and Backlog sites listed under Health and Safety Code section 25356. In addition, SMBRP includes Certified with Operation and Maintenance sites. SMBRP's component of the Cortese List can be accessed on DTSC's website at: [http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/SiteCleanup/Cortese\\_List.cfm](http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/SiteCleanup/Cortese_List.cfm).

This information is sorted by site name, and by clicking on the site name, you will be linked to the profile report for that particular site. **NOTE:** SMBRP's portion of the Cortese List does not include information on Hazardous Waste Management Program sites. DTSC's EnviroStor database includes additional categories of sites that are not required to be listed on the Cortese List.

**Q: What is the List of Deed-Restricted sites and is it separate from EnviroStor?**

A: A deed restricted site is a property where DTSC has placed limits or requirements on future use of the property due to varying levels of cleanup possible, practical, or necessary at the site. EnviroStor provides SMBRP's list of Deed-Restricted sites and is separate from the list of Deed-Restricted sites maintained by DTSC's Hazardous Waste Management Program (HWMP). SMBRP's list includes sites under SMBRP's oversight and generally does not include current or former hazardous waste facilities that required a hazardous waste facility permit. SMBRP's list includes deed restrictions that are

active, and sites that have multiple deed restrictions. Not all deed restrictions are available at this time in .pdf format. DTSC will continue to update its list as documents become available. You can access SMBRP's list of Deed-Restricted sites at: [http://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/deed\\_restrictions.asp](http://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/deed_restrictions.asp).

**Q: How can I export or download files from EnviroStor, and what information do they include?**

A: By using the "Export to Excel" feature, all EnviroStor search results (in list format) can be exported to an Excel spreadsheet onto the user's computer. EnviroStor also provides downloadable files that include all information contained on the profile report such as site name, location, status, site type, planned and completed activities, site management requirements, ID codes, regulatory agencies, etc.

**Q: What should I do if I think there is inaccurate information about a site?**

A: If you believe there is inaccurate information about a site, please contact the EnviroStor Help Link at: [envirostor@dtsc.ca.gov](mailto:envirostor@dtsc.ca.gov), or call SMBRP's (EnviroStor) help desk at (916) 323-3400. Your comment will be forwarded to the appropriate Project Manager for possible correction. Or you may contact the Project Manager directly, if one is assigned to the site.

**Q: How do I obtain more information about a site?**

A: To obtain additional information about a site, please contact the Project Manager listed for the site (contact information is available in the profile report) or contact the Region file room for an appointment to view the project file. If there is no Project Manager listed, please contact the Supervisor or Division/Branch listed for the site.

**Q: What is a Brownfield, and how can I search for Brownfield sites?**

A: Brownfields are properties that are contaminated, or thought to be contaminated, and are underutilized due to perceived remediation costs and liability concerns. DTSC has integrated existing programs and developed a number of new tools to facilitate reuse of brownfields properties. All of the categories of sites where DTSC is involved with site investigation or cleanup include properties that fit the broad federal definition of brownfields. Because of the broad nature of the brownfields definition, DTSC has not developed a specific list of brownfield sites. In general, the category "Voluntary Cleanup Sites" may contain more sites that are eligible for various brownfield programs and services. Historically, DTSC did not include information regarding redevelopment and reuse plans for properties in its site database; in the future, DTSC will include this information, when available. You can access additional information about DTSC's various brownfields programs and services at: <http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/SiteCleanup/Brownfields/index.cfm>.

**Q: Did EnviroStor replace "CalSites?"**

A: Yes, the EnviroStor database replaced SMBRP's former database, referred to as, "the Site Mitigation and Brownfields Reuse Program database (CalSites)," which was used for tracking sites with known contamination or sites where there may be reasons to investigate further. Please refer to the EnviroStor Fact Sheet for additional information.

**Q: I received a report from a disclosure source, but a site listed in the report is not in the EnviroStor database.**

A: Many companies export data from the EnviroStor database and combine data from multiple sources into a common report. DTSC is not responsible for misrepresentation of data that is obtained from the EnviroStor database. If a site is listed on a disclosure source report, but is not listed in the EnviroStor database, please contact the company that generated the report.

**Q: I have a question that is not on the FAQ. How do I get help?**

A: Please refer to the Glossary of Terms. If you cannot find the answer to your question in the Glossary of Terms, contact the EnviroStor help desk at (916) 323-3400 or send an email to [envirostor@dtsc.ca.gov](mailto:envirostor@dtsc.ca.gov).